

# LIVING TERROR

MERLIN X. HOUDINI, IV

Living organisms move. They act. Their actions may be inimical to man's best interests. They inspire fear, dread, even terror. From time immemorial, humans have viewed with alarm, nay, with horror, the evil that lurks inside living consciousness.

I have now assembled the vocabulary of fear as it relates to life, and am releasing it to an unsuspecting world in this article. Those of faint heart are warned to turn immediately to other pages of Word Ways!

Inevitably, error has crept into the literature enumerating these fears. Sisson's Word and Expression Locator, by A. F. Sisson (Parker Publishing Company, West Nyack, New York, 1966), lists the term AILEUROPHOBIA for fear of cats. That spelling is etymologically indefensible and must be dismissed as a typographical error, possibly for AILOUROPHOBIA. The Dunlop Book of Facts, edited by Norris and Ross McWhirter (Dreghorn Publications, London, 1964), gives BATRACHOPHOBIA as the fear of reptiles. The term is derived from the Greek word BATRACHOS which means "frog", so that the listing in Dunlop is clearly an error.

I have deemed it expedient to divide known fears into three groups. The first and largest group is comprised of fears revolving around animals and animal parts or products.

## Object or Situation Feared: Names of Phobias

Animal furs: doraphobia  
 Animals: zoophobia  
 Animal skins: doraphobia  
 Animal spirits: zoophobia  
 Animal teeth: odontophobia  
 Ants: myrmecophobia  
 Bees: apiophobia, apiphobia, melissophobia  
 Bee stings: apiphobia  
 Being clawed by animals: amychophobia  
 Being scratched by animals: amychophobia  
 Birds: ornithophobia  
 Bulls: taurophobia  
 Cats: aelurophobia, ailourophobia, ailurophobia, elurophobia, felino-phobia, galeophobia, gatophobia  
 Dogs: cynophobia, kynophobia  
 Feathers: pteronophobia

Felines: aelurophobia, ailurophobia, fēlinophobia  
 Fish: ichthyophobia  
 Frogs: batrachophobia  
 Harboring tapeworms: taeniophobia  
 Horses: hippophobia  
 Human beings: anthropophobia, apanthropy, apanthropia  
 Insects: entomophobia  
 Lice: pediculophobia, phthiriophobia  
 Meat diets: carnophobia  
 Mice: muriphobia, musophobia  
 Mites: acarophobia, entomophobia  
 People: anthropophobia  
 Reptiles: herpetophobia, ophidiophobia  
 Serpents: ophiophobia, ophiophoby  
 Shellfish: ostraconophobia  
 Snakes: ophidiophobia, ophiophobia, snakephobia  
 Spiders: arachnephobia, arachnophobia  
 Stinging insects: melissophobia  
 Stings: cnidophobia  
 Swine: swinophobia  
 Ticks: entomophobia  
 Toads: batrachophobia  
 Wasps: melissophobia  
 Wild animals: agrizoophobia  
 Worms: acarophobia, helminthophobia, vermiphobia, scoleciphobia  
 Zoomorphized entities: zoophobia

The second, much smaller, group is comprised of fears revolving around plants and plant products. Evidently, plants are regarded as much more docile than animals.

#### Object or Situation Feared: Names of Phobias

Big trees: dendrophobia  
 Flowers: anthophobia, botanophobia  
 Forests: hylophobia  
 Plants: botanophobia  
 Trees: dendrophobia  
 Vegetables: lachanophobia  
 Woods: hylophobia

The third and smallest group consists of fears revolving about microscopic and parasitic organisms, viewing these organisms as harbingers of disease and death.

#### Object or Situation Feared: Names of Phobias

Bacilli: bacillophobia  
 Bacteria: bacteriophobia, microbiophobia  
 Germs: bacteriophobia, microbiophobia, microphobia, spermato-  
 phobia, spermophobia

Microbes: bacilliphobia, bacillophobia, microbiophobia, microphobia  
 Microorganisms: bacteriophobia, microbiophobia, microphobia  
 Parasites: acarophobia, helminthophobia, parasitophobia, pediculophobia, phthiriophobia

As always, the exact sources of the terms and definitions just presented are available on request. Further flocks of phobias are on the drawing boards, for the benefit of those waiting on pins and needles to get acquainted with them.

## MALEDICTA

This is the name of a new journal specializing in the study of words used as instruments of aggression. Quoting from the inside front cover of the first (Summer 1977) issue, it specializes in

"verbal aggression, pejoration, derogation, scurrility, vituperation, objurgation & dysphemism - swearwords, insults & terms of abuse - threats - curses - blasphemy - scatology - cynicism, sarcasm, satire & irony - derogatory proverbs, sayings, similes, comparisons & metaphors - negatively valued nouns, verbs, adjectives & adverbs - expletives, exclamations, offensive ejaculations & other emotive and affective utterances ... "

This issue contains articles such as "Malas Palabras: Talking Dirty in Cuban Spanish", "The Origin of Our Strongest Taboo-Word" (Shipley thinks it comes from the middle English *firk*), "Malediction and Psycho-Semantic Theory: The Case of Yiddish" and "Belaboring the Obvious: Sarcastic Interrogative Affirmatives and Negatives" (is water wet? is Billy Graham Catholic?). Not all articles are soberly academic; there is a leavening of humor as well, as exemplified by Stinky Pinkies (rhyming adjective-noun pairs, as the synonym for "one dollar intercourse").

Since verbal aggression employs many sexual and scatological terms, the journal is definitely X-rated -- vulgar and obscene words are frequently and explicitly displayed in the various articles. Those interested should send ten dollars by check or money order for a year's subscription (three or four issues totalling 300 pages) to Dr. Reinhold Aman, 331 South Greenfield Avenue, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186. If chicken-hearted, send him a postcard asking for an examination copy (returnable by fourth class book mail for 35 cents if not satisfied).